

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

May 17, 2001

LB 305, 715

there to try to put something together that I think will fly. The first idea before you there comes from Senator Redfield. It's from LB 715, a bill that now is in the Education Committee. I would propose taking \$2 million from the lottery over the biennium for the Recruiting Educators to Nebraska Fund. Teachers who are in their first three years of teaching in Nebraska and are teaching in a shortage area, as determined by the Nebraska Department of Education, would qualify for an annual \$1,500 stipend for each of those first three years. A teacher could receive a maximum of \$4,500. The program, funded from lottery proceeds, would be administered by the Department of Education. Teachers participating in the loan forgiveness program would be ineligible for this stipend. And when I visited with Senator Redfield about this bill, her intention was to have something...to have another recruiting incentive out there for new teachers who, for whatever reason, are not participating in the loan forgiveness program. I will deal in more detail the impact this would have on the lottery fund, but let me move through the other bullet points first; \$632,050 from the General Fund for the Master Teacher Program. Some of you may recall, I ran master teacher up the flagpole before when we were on the mainline budget. The law right now authorizes a \$5,000 bonus for those who qualify for the Master Teacher Program. What I have done is reduced that amount in half, make the bonus \$2,500 instead of 5,000. Actually, what I am doing is taking the recommendation from the Teacher Salary Task Force Report. A teacher qualifies for the Master Teacher stipend by earning certification from a national credentialing organization recognized by the State Education Department. This is different from a master's degree. This is separate from a master's degree. The applicant goes through a rigorous examination of teaching methods. The examination is conducted by a national board for professional teaching standards. The fee for certification would be paid by the state in two halves; the first half at the time of application and the second half of the fee would be paid upon certification. The next bullet point deals with a plan to develop a model for a merit pay system in Nebraska. This is the same provision that was in the Education Committee's version of LB 305. It also is taken from the Teacher Salary Task Force...Task Force Report. It would take five years to develop this model program. Over the biennium the